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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/609,177	06/26/2003	Kirk W. Watkins	P150 1030.1	7762
7590	09/29/2004		EXAMINER	
WOMBLE CARLYLE SANDRIDGE & RICE				MAUST, TIMOTHY LEWIS
P.O. Box 7037				
Atlanta, GA 30357-0037				
				ART UNIT
				PAPER NUMBER
				3751

DATE MAILED: 09/29/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/609,177	WATKINS, KIRK W.
Examiner	Art Unit	
Timothy L Maust	3751	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 July 2004.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-42 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) 30-42 is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1,6,7,9,10,13-17,28 and 29 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) 2-5,8,11,12 and 18-27 is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 7/2/04

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

The following is a corrected version of the restriction mailed on 4/28/04.

Election/Restrictions

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 1-29, drawn to a fuel intake device for a vehicle, classified in class 141, subclass 350.
- II. Claims 30-42, drawn to a fuel intake system, classified in class 141, subclass 59.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions I and II are related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed because it doesn't require the use of a coil. The subcombination has separate utility such as being used in a system not requiring a pivotally mounted body portion.

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Claim Objections

Claim 13 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form. The "cover" is defined in claim 7.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 6, 7, 13-15, 17, 28 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Fedele et al.

In regard to claims 1, 6, 7 and 13-15, the Fedele et al. reference discloses a "fuel intake device" (see Fig. 1) comprising a "pivotal cover" 24 having a "body portion" 48 and "fuel intake passage" 54, as claimed.

In regard to claim 8, see column 2, line 57.

In regard to claims 11 and 12, the "body" is plastic (see col. 1, lines 52 and 53).

In regard to claim 17, pipe 12 is attached to the vehicle fuel tank.

In regard to claims 28 and 29, the method as claimed would be inherent during normal use and operation of the device.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 9 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fedele et al.

Fedelem et al. disclose the invention as claimed (discussed supra), but do not disclose the body being made of aluminum. However, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to make the device of aluminum (well known in the fuel pipe inlet art), since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice. *In re Leshin*, 125 USPQ 416

Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fedele et al. in view of Schmitt et al.

Fedelem et al. disclose the invention as claimed (discussed supra), but do not disclose the "cover" having a lock. However, the Schmitt et al. reference discloses another fuel filler apparatus having a "lock" 20 to prevent unauthorized access. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time

the invention was made to modify the Fedele et al. device to include a lock on the cover in view of the Schmitt et al. reference in order to prevent unauthorized access.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-29 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The Fisher and Foltz references pertain to various fuel intake devices, similar to Applicant's device.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 2-5, 8, 11, 12 and 18-27 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Timothy L Maust whose telephone number is (703) 308-3390. The examiner can normally be reached on Tue. - Fri. 6:30 - 5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gregory Huson can be reached on (703) 308-2580. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Timothy L. Maust
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3751

Tlm
9/22/04